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REFORMER

in a postscript: " I forgot to tell you that the invitation is addressed to M. Émile Zola, President de la Société des Gens de Lettres."

That postscript was all important, for it explained the character of the invitation. Various amenities had passed between the French Society and the Institute of Journalists already, and now the Institute, being about to hold a conference in London, had courteously invited the officials of various foreign organisations. It so happened that Zola was one of the officials in question. If some other man had held his position in the Société des Gens de Lettres in 1893 that other man would certainly have been invited, and Zola in all likelihood would not have been asked at all. But the circumstances were not fully understood at the time, and some badly informed controversialists, in their anger at finding the hateful Zola a guest of an English newspaper organisation, subsequently heaped undeserved abuse on the Institute of Journalists. Vizetelly, however, made various inquiries of the Institute's officials, and having satisfied himself that Zola would have no reason to complain of his reception, he again wrote suggesting that the invitation should be accepted. On August 18 Zola, who meantime had also consulted M. George Petilleau, the official delegate of the Société des Gens de Lettres in England,¹ responded:

" I have just accepted, officially, the invitation of the English journalists, so it is quite decided that I shall attend their congress. It would be very kind of you to keep me informed of any incidents that may arise, and I also rely on you to let me know as soon as possible what toast I shall have to acknowledge [at the Institute's

¹ Mr. Petilleau has also "been for many years President of the National Society of French. Masters in Eugland. He is French professor at Charterhouse.